

years and tripled it in 10 years, called for huge new tax increases. Yet, when it came up for a vote—and only because Republicans forced a vote on that—it lost. It didn't get any support. I think it was 97 to 0. Not even our friends across the aisle could support the President's outrageous proposal back then. So why doesn't he come back with a new one? Why doesn't he stay at the table? Instead of going to Philadelphia tonight and raising money, why doesn't he call Senator MCCONNELL, Speaker BOEHNER, Minority Leader PELOSI, and Majority Leader REID into his office and sit down and do his job, just do his job?

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. On my way here, Mr. President, I had the great pleasure of running into the Redway family, a few minutes ago, visiting from the State of Connecticut. Jack Redway is a former public servant in the State, and he is here with his wife Sue and other members of his family. When I told them I was on my way here to talk on the floor of the Senate, they asked me what the subject was. When I told them the Senate is debating the debt, the deficit, and the budget, one of them said: Same old, same old.

We are here on the same old, same old issues. But the American people have had enough. They have had enough of the tax breaks and the special giveaways and the sweetheart deals that go to the special interests and that have driven our deficit to sky-high, intolerable levels. We are now at a turning point and really at a precipice where we simply cannot afford these kinds of tax breaks and sweetheart deals any longer, and the people of Connecticut are saying enough is enough to the same old, same old deals with these special interests. We ought to come together on a bipartisan basis. Not only do we have a right and opportunity, we have a responsibility and an obligation to say enough is enough and to eliminate these kinds of tax breaks that squander and waste scarce resources.

The ethanol subsidies have been voted on by this body, overwhelmingly, by Republicans and Democrats, rejected. And the reason is quite simply that we can save \$400 million each month, close to \$2.5 billion by the end of this year if we eliminate these subsidies on ethanol. We shouldn't be divided on this issue going forward. We ought to be united on a bipartisan basis because these scarce resources are necessary to make sure we do not

burden our children and their children with this kind of debt going forward.

The loophole that enables corporate jets to be depreciated at a faster and higher rate than commercial airplanes adds to the debt and the deficit in hundreds of millions of dollars. If we are serious about debt reduction and addressing the deficit, we should eliminate that loophole. It is about making the Tax Code fair and effective.

Over the last decade the big five oil companies have taken home more than \$1 trillion in profits while enjoying tens of billions of dollars in taxpayer subsidies. Those moneys, whether you call them revenues or taxes or breaks, whatever the nomenclature, whatever the rhetoric, they are a loss to the taxpayers and the people of the United States of America without any reason because these five oil companies are among the most profitable and lucrative in the history of the world, and they don't need that money.

It is time to say enough is enough to the kinds of hidden subsidies that go to special interests, and there are others that we ought to scrutinize and eliminate in the name of fairness and effectiveness in our government so that we can be serious about addressing our debt and our deficit.

Budgets are about choices. Some choices are not easy. We face tough choices, but we ought to put to use the common sense of the American people, to say enough is enough to the same old, same old hidden subsidies, tax breaks, special giveaways to special interests. Cutting Medicare benefits or Medicaid will not make us stronger. Firing teachers will not make us stronger. Forcing kids out of college will not make us stronger in Connecticut or across the country. None of these measures will make us stronger or fairer as a nation, nor will rolling back our investments in innovation and research, which are vital to the high-tech jobs of the future, nor will cutting our investments in the essential means of transportation—high-speed rail, so important to Connecticut. None of these cuts will bring back jobs, which has to be our priority.

Economic growth and job creation must be put first, and the way to do it is to eliminate the wasteful tax subsidies, the breaks for special interests. Eliminating them will make us stronger, it will make us fairer as a nation.

I urge us to come together and put aside whatever the labels and the rhetoric and the nomenclature as we call them and do the right thing to make our Nation stronger and fairer.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF DAVID H. PETRAEUS TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David H. Petraeus, of New Hampshire, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 hours of debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Thank you very much, Madam President.

I come to the floor as the chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence to speak about the nomination of GEN David Petraeus to become the Director of the CIA. I wish to thank the majority leader for bringing this nomination to the floor in such a quick fashion because the committee, only earlier this week, on Tuesday, unanimously approved the nomination of General Petraeus.

I think there is no doubt but that General Petraeus is among the finest military officers and strategic thinkers of his generation. We are very lucky to have his service. He wrote the Army's counterinsurgency strategy and then applied it in Iraq, securing a military victory from what had appeared to be a descent into chaos and violence.

One year ago to this day, the Senate confirmed General Petraeus to replace GEN Stanley McChrystal as the leader of American and International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan. Since then he has shifted the strategy, implemented the troop surge, kept our coalition together, and today our military and intelligence analysts point to gains in the security situation and in the Afghan military and ability of the police to secure their nation.

General Petraeus's willingness to take on the Afghanistan mission also demonstrates his extraordinary commitment to public service. At the time, he was serving in Tampa, FL, as the Combatant Commander for Central Command, no longer directly in charge of a war zone but with the responsibility for not just Afghanistan but for 19 other countries as well. He agreed to what was a step down in the military "org chart" to take on the hardest military challenge in the world and to deploy from Tampa to Kabul. The Nation certainly owes General Petraeus a debt of gratitude for 37 years in uniform.

When he is confirmed, General Petraeus will be taking off the uniform to become Director Petraeus. He has clearly considered the differences in culture and mission between the CIA and the military, and now he will shift